



Issue 12 – October 2015



Welcome to the October edition of the Additional and Complex Needs newsletter from College Development Network. Hope you managed to find sunshine somewhere over the summer and are now refreshed and settled in for another challenging year.

As usual, if you would like to contribute anything to future newsletters or would just like to discuss whether something would be of interest, please email lorna.peggie@cdn.ac.uk

Please share this e-zine with colleagues who would find it of interest.

National developments

Meeting students' additional needs and promoting inclusion

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) is undertaking an evaluation process to understand how the sector is currently meeting the additional needs of their students and the impact that support has. To date, we have undertaken two college region visits and a visit to the Scottish Rural University College and we have been struck by:



- the professionalism of the college staff involved and the 'extra miles' they are prepared to go to get the best support for their students
- the role of colleges in helping students identify the reasons behind their additional education needs – often for the first time in their educational journey
- the level of partnership working with other organisations such as the NHS, particularly in relation to the increasing levels of declared mental health issues and stress-related illnesses
- both the levels of personalised support provided to students and the inclusive approaches adopted by colleges to overcome issues relating to stigma
- differing views (and therefore approaches) in what the funds can and cannot be used to support such as additional educational support for care experienced learners and/or learners faced with extreme poverty.

It is too early in the review to come to any initial recommendations but we are confident that this review is starting a good conversation on how best to meet the needs of the wonderfully diverse range of students who undertake college education every year. We would like to take the time to thank college Principals and staff for the time and support towards this review and to encourage anyone who wishes to get more involved to get in touch. Please contact Fiona Burns, fburns@sfc.ac.uk, 0131 313 6517 for more details.

SCLD report: achieving our potential?

Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability (SCLD) has recently released a report on the provision of further education opportunities for adults with learning disabilities. The report describes some very positive improvements but acknowledges that these are not nationally replicated. The report writers also admit that the scale of the report does not warrant firm recommendations but they do raise some interesting questions to be considered by appropriate bodies:



- How can regional and national monitoring and tracking systems ensure that the progress of people with learning disabilities is tracked from school, through college, and beyond?
- How can regional outcome agreements be used more consistently to ensure positive outcomes for students with learning disabilities as well as the wider population of students?
- How can the agencies named in 'The keys to life' recommendation above, along with the Scottish Government and the Scottish Funding Council, work together to implement this recommendation?
- What is the alternative lifelong learning offer for older adults with learning disabilities, and how can their learning outcomes be achieved?
- How can colleges be supported to implement the partnership working identified in 'A Natural Progression' as being critical in the transition of students with learning disabilities from college into employment?

View the full [SCLD report here](#).

CDN events

Access and Inclusion network meeting, 9 October 2015

The Access and Inclusion network is primarily for staff across Scotland's colleges with key responsibility for ensuring the access and inclusion of learners with a broad range of additional support needs, into all aspects of college life.

View the [programme and book online here](#).

Corporate Parenting Responsibilities: What does this mean for colleges? Thursday 8 October 2015

In April 2015 the Children and Young People Act (Scotland) Act 2014 came into force, under the terms of the Act colleges will have corporate parenting responsibilities. Attendance at this event will help colleges to start to fulfil some of their duties as described in the Act. This is a free event for staff working in colleges, including senior and middle managers, who have responsibility for and involvement in creating a corporate parenting plan for their college.

View the [programme and book online here](#).

Enabling student carers to access and succeed in Scotland's colleges – Sharing practice event, Wednesday 4 November 2015

Student carers are students who provide unpaid support to family or friends who could not manage without their help. Recommendation 10 of the Scottish Government 'Getting it Right for Young Carers' states that colleges and universities need to be alert and sensitive to the needs and issues confronting this group of hidden carers.

CDN has been working with student carers, colleges, their local partners, SDS and national carer organisations to develop a series of awareness raising resources to enable student carers to access and succeed in Scotland's colleges.

This event will also provide an opportunity for colleges to share their own practice.

View the [programme and book online here](#).

Supporting Students with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) in College

CDN has been delivering a number of college-based workshops raising awareness of the challenges faced by learners with autistic spectrum disorders and considering strategies which help to create an 'autism friendly' environment in college.

Workshops focus either on:

- supporting Students with ASD and Learning Disability or
- supporting Students with ASD across college programmes.

If you would like to know more please contact lorna.peggie@cdn.ac.uk

Other upcoming events

CALL Scotland

Almost half of Scottish schools now use Digital Exams. Colleges are increasingly likely to have students for whom this is their preferred method of sitting exams. Candidates who use digital papers require digital prelims and assessments in the same format and so CALL are running a hands-on course to provide staff with the skills required to create these materials.

This workshop will run on 8 October and 16 November 2015 at CALL Scotland in Edinburgh.

[Read more and book online](#)

Webinar archive

CALL's new programme of Webinars is about to kick off, but you can still view their free and informative archived webinars

You might find these of particular interest:

- Google Chrome Apps to support reading and writing
- One Note – a digital jotter for Windows, Mac, iPad or Android.

[View CALL Scotland current and archived webinars](#)

sparqs: course rep training for students in supported education

sparqs is funded by the Scottish Funding Council to support colleges and universities to develop student engagement practices. We believe that all students are able to make a positive difference to the educational experience in their college and benefit from this, helping shape the nature of their learning.



A key way for colleges to support student engagement is to recruit course reps and to develop them through course rep training. sparqs delivers the majority of course rep training across colleges and has training designed specifically for students in supported education. Supporting this group of students to be course reps is only one aspect of our work. It is crucial that the college also adapts its engagement mechanisms to ensure students are equitably involved. We can work with colleges individually to explore how it can make its student engagement more accessible.

[View the sparqs course rep training materials here](#) and to discuss sparqs providing training and support in your college contact stephanie.millar@sparqs.ac.uk

Learning and teaching

Developments at National 2

From the start of session 2015-16, SQA have provided a suite of 29 Freestanding Units including 13 Employment Skills Units. The Unit Specifications for these Freestanding Units were published at the end of January 2015 and Unit Support Notes and Unit Assessment Support packs (including 1 exemplar assessment activity) are now available.



The Employability Skills units, though not exclusive to colleges, were definitely designed with college delivery in mind and I am sure many of you will be interested in adding them to your Supported Education curriculum. They cover a broad range of vocational areas and have the flexibility to be delivered in the workplace or in a college simulated work setting. There is also a Preparing for Employment unit which covers job application skills.

You will find unit specification and support notes [here](#).

Time is always precious so developing resources for new units is a challenge. If any of you would be interested in working in partnership with CDN to develop resources for these units please get in touch. It would involve identifying what would be most useful, discussing possible formats and then testing them out with students. They could then be made available on the CDN website. Several colleges have responded positively but if you are interested in finding out more please contact lorna.peggie@cdn.ac.uk

You now have the ability to download all National 1 and 2 documents as well as information on National 1 and 2 Awards from the [National 1 and 2 web page](#).

Around colleges

Exploring the campus – Borders College

Every year, in August and September, the halls of Scotland's colleges and universities buzz with the excited throng of the annual intake of new students, students eager to start on new voyages of discovery. Art students enthusiastically sharpen pencils. Business students file and organise expectant, brightly coloured Pukka pads into timetable order. Joiners and Carpenters proudly show off their new Stanley measuring tapes, with the age old boast 'Mines is bigger than yours!' And then they enter the building ... and they all get lost!

For most students, however, finding themselves confused by a maze of corridors is no more than a minor inconvenience and, within a few days, areas become familiar and landmarks become known. But for some students, this isn't the case. For some, particularly those with poor memory, brain injuries, autistic spectrum disorders or learning disabilities, the campus remains a new and bewildering place, sometimes for many months.

This was the case for some members of a group of students enrolled on the Options for Learning course at Borders College, in Galashiels. Delivering 'Exploring a Local Area' to the group, I had been asked to start with the college building itself, as it was known that some of the students would struggle to find their way around. Having been provided with an iPad to experiment with in an educational setting, it made sense to try to find a way of using technology as a means of familiarising the students with the building.

Task 3 – Spreading Our Wings

We are now going to explore the building. The picture below is a map or plan of the campus, in exactly the same way as we had a plan of the route in task 1. It is a very simple drawing of the shape of the building that you were passing overhead in, say, a hot air balloon!



You are here

The building we are in just now is just one of a group of buildings on the campus. We are in the biggest building on the site, but there are 2 others. These are called the Technical Training Centre (sometimes shortened to the TTC) and the High Hall.

For the moment, though, we are going to just concentrate on getting to know this building.

To do this, you will work in groups of 4. Your lecturer will give each group a map of the building. Follow the route marked out on the map. At various places along the route you will find a QR code. These may be printed onto notice boards or taped to doors or windows. Using the iPads, scan the QR codes to learn about what happens in that part of the building. If you can, answer the questions over the page.

Once you have finished this task, make your way back to the classroom.



My solution was to create a series of videos, accessed through QR codes, with the QR codes being prominently displayed at the various locations throughout the building. Having been taught how to use a QR code scanning app, the students worked in teams, each equipped with a college iPad, to explore the college by following a map (see above), and scanning any codes they discovered to see what each area of the building was used for.

Conclusion

The feedback from the students, in conjunction with quiz sheets completed indicate that this was a popular and successful activity, with the students enjoying 'discovering' the building for themselves, and enjoying being able to do so independently. In addition, the viewings recorded on YouTube suggest that some of the videos were viewed on a number of occasions by members of other student groups, so it is likely that others also scanned the codes out of, perhaps curiosity. In short, a very successful exercise for the specific target group, but with potential to be even more useful and interactive.

Difficulties encountered

The exercise didn't go entirely smoothly. In order for the iPads to be able to view the online content, there needs to be robust network connectivity and Wi-Fi coverage in all areas of the campus and, sadly, this was not the case when we first tried the activity. However, the IT Team got the iPads connected to a more robust network, and they worked flawlessly on our second outing.



Scan the code to see one of the videos used in this task or view video via this link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uil-uKBmLI0&app=desktop>

Developing the materials

- map created using adapted artwork from publications team
- videos created using Ulead video studio
- QR codes generated using www.qrmaker.org
- videos uploaded to YouTube
- download QR code reader to your device(s)

Simon Watson swatson@borderscollege.ac.uk

LEAD Scotland

Hi, my name is Rebecca Scarlett and I'm the new Senior Policy & Information Officer here at Lead Scotland. Part of my role involves running a helpline for disabled people and their carers dealing with queries relating to accessing post-16 education. The helpline hours have now been extended to 10 hours per week, so it is now open from Monday to Friday 0930-1130 and the number is 0800 999 2568. Outside of these hours people can leave a voicemail or email info@lead.org.uk.



Generally the type of enquiries I deal with are around education options, accessing funding, finding out how welfare benefits are affected by student funding as well as advising on arranging support, reasonable adjustments and the Equality Act. I also do a lot of sign posting to the most appropriate organisation with more specific queries. Outside of running the helpline I work on policy and consultative projects so I am keen to meet professionals across the spectrum of community, further and higher education and develop my knowledge around inclusive practice.

You can reach me on 0131 228 9441 or rscarlett@lead.org.uk if you would like to discuss anything or can see an opportunity for collaborative working. I look forward to meeting some of you at the next Access & Inclusion Forum.

Equality Act Guidance document

Lead Scotland has produced a new information booklet about how the Equality Act can be used and referred to in post school learning. It is a helpful resource to clarify and explain what duties and obligations education providers have under the Equality Act around disability and to provide reasonable adjustments. The booklet also helps to identify different types of discrimination within an education setting and whether discrimination might have taken place as well as providing useful contacts to get further advice and support.

[The Equality Act in Post-school Learning](#)

Supporting learning

Dyslexia awareness

The new academic year is now underway. The Initial Assessment process should be complete and the results identifying those at risk of being dyslexic. A free writing exercise completed under timed conditions is an effective way to identify those who are unable to construct sentences appropriately, confuse letter order in spellings and poor letter formations in writing.

There are signs that lecturers can look out for in the class. For many students, they are following a vocational topic and will be learning new and sometimes complex vocabulary. Learning new words and phrases, particularly difficult spellings can be a challenge. It places a cognitive load on the working memory, so to help with this it is good to encourage the class to maintain a glossary.

Working memory will also impact on practical elements of vocational courses. Students have to follow a set of instructions to complete a practical task, but may forget the sequence for completion. Technology, such as a tablet, in a workshop can be a good tool for these students. The task recorded on Moodle, will enable them to refresh their memory by watching the recording and will not be asking the teacher or other students 'what comes next?'

Working memory is only one aspect of the difficulties faced by dyslexic students. This year, Dyslexia Awareness Week in Scotland is held from 2-8 November. This would be an opportunity to find out more about your dyslexic learners, but for the college it could be an opportunity to explain more to students about how dyslexia affects them and how to access support and advice.

Please contact Alan Waugh for further details: bordersdyslexia@outlook.com

Supporting deaf students at college

- Looking for advice on how to improve services for deaf students in your college?
- Interested in shaping training and information events for other support professionals across Scotland?
- Want to become part of a professional community – as supportive to those new to the area of support for deaf students as it is to experienced professionals?

The Adept Scotland Committee (Association of Deaf Education Professionals and Trainees) aims to improve services in educational settings for deaf people at all ages. We do this through activities such as CPD events, creating resources, and cross-sector networking.

Committee members are from diverse backgrounds: teaching, academic research, audiology, interpreting, communication support, policy and professional development. If you have any questions about supporting deaf students, we will do our best to help.

Adept membership is open to all with an interest in supporting deaf learners. Membership is £25 per year and benefits include discounts on training days. Join us, or check out the latest news at <http://adeptuk.co.uk/>



SQA partnership with SignVideo

Since March of this year, SQA has partnered with SignVideo to enable deaf British Sign Language (BSL) users to contact them conveniently in their own language. BSL users with access to a computer, a webcam and a broadband connection, are now able to connect to a SignVideo interpreter instantly and make a free BSL interpreted call to the SQA Customer Support Team.

A BSL Live link is now available on the contact page of the [SQA website](#).

ICT

New initiative: DART project legacy

The ATLAS (Assistive Technology Learning and Support) project team at City of Glasgow College created an innovative and comprehensive plan to integrate assistive technology provision with the aim of improving service delivery and the student experience.

The project team which includes Learning Support, IT and subject specialist staff were successful in securing DART (Disseminating Assistive Roles and Technology - Jisc funded project) 'deep support' to put the plan into practice. One of the aims of the project was to create an Assistive Technology forum to harness expertise and share best practice. Working in partnership with Jisc and CDN. City of Glasgow College is now leading in the launch of the Assistive Technology forum - a practitioner led group which aims to support staff in developing and embedding assistive technology for students in FE and HE.

A diverse membership from various disciplines in colleges and universities is encouraged to keep posts interesting and of course informative on 'and around' the topic of Assistive Technology for students in FE and HE.

New members are always welcome, simply send an email to:
claire.guthrie@cityofglasgowcollege.ac.uk or elaine.argue@cityofglasgowcollege.ac.uk

Face-to-face meetings are planned in addition to this forum, with the first planned for November 2015.

Technology to support young workforce development webinar: 13 November 2015

In December 2014 the Scottish Government published its 'Developing the Young Workforce' strategy. In light of this development Jisc Scotland is pleased to offer a one hour webinar which will focus on how technology can support universities and colleges to deliver young workforce development. Participants will be introduced to a range of Jisc products and services and will have the opportunity to share experiences and best practice with others from across the sector.

The webinar is open to all further education (FE) staff involved in strategic planning, operational planning and delivery around the young workforce development agenda in Scotland. Although our primary audience is staff working in FE, the webinar will also be of interest to staff working in higher education (HE).

Participants will leave the webinar:

- with an awareness of the ways in which Jisc products and services can underpin the use of technology in young workforce development
- with an understanding of how you can communicate with Jisc to help shape future input
- feeling inspired by the examples of good practice drawn from other participants
Knowing where to go for further advice and guidance.

Book a place on the [Jisc webinar here](#).

Accessible by design: a Jisc competition to improve accessibility and inclusion in post-16 education

A new Jisc project was launched on 14 September 2015. Accessible by design is a competition to improve accessibility and inclusion in post-16 education. The competition will be open to anyone working or studying in UK higher education, further education and skills. This competition poses a challenge for teams of staff and/or students to share their bright idea for improving the accessibility and inclusion of higher and further education and schools.

Jisc will offer intensive support, plus a grant of £5000, to teams that reach the voting threshold and are selected for the design sprint, in order to help them develop their idea into a prototype or solution.

Teams can submit either raw concepts or an idea for something already in use that they want to improve. Ideas could be tools that meet learner or organisation's needs but will need to have the potential to benefit more than just a single institution. In the past, Jisc have funded an accessible version of YouTube called [Access YouTube](#), accessible e-books, and mobile learning sites.



The successful teams receive £5000 and will participate in a design sprint to get their idea off the ground. Jisc's elevator will be open for submission of ideas from 14 September 2015. For further information, please visit [Jisc website](#)

Margaret McKay. Subject specialist (accessibility and inclusion) Scotland, Mob: 07443 984444; Skype: Margaret.Jisc' Twitter: @Mags_McKay
Jisc Scotland, c/o Argyll Court, The Castle Business Park, Stirling, FK9 4TY

Free Stuff

SQA launches Ushare

The Scottish Qualifications Authority has launched Ushare, a free-to-use online community that allows users to comment on, rate and share links to open-source learning and teaching materials.

SQA has produced a short film to mark the launch of Ushare - watch it on the [SQA YouTube Channel](#).

Ushare is available now at www.Ushare.education

Quick Links

[Past ACN newsletters](#)

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